(c) if not, the reasons for delay in phasing out subsidies on these products; and

(d) by when Government propose to phase out subsidies on the above items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (d) It has been decided to phase out subsidy on PDS Kerosene and Domestic LPG in three to five years effective 01.04.2002.

Acquisition of Gas fields in Saudi Arabia

2946. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Videsh propose to acquire a gas field in Saudi Arabia;

(b) if so, the mode of transportation contemplated; and

(c) by when the project will commence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) As of date there is no proposal to acquire gas field in Saudi Arabia by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) or Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC). However, recently he Saudi Arabian Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources has indicated to offer, in the first round, 3 gas exploration blocks for foreign participation, through open bidding. The data on the blocks would be shown by the Saudi authorities to companies which qualify as per the Saudi assessment.

Supply of Kerosene to Madhya Pradesh

†2947. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether after the formation of Chhattisgarh allocation of kerosene oil to Madhya Pradesh has continuously declined;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the allocation of kerosene made to Madhya Pradesh during the last three years and whether this allocation is being made on the basis of the population.

(c) whether Government have received any proposal from Government of Madhdya Pradesh to enhance monthly quota of kerosene in view of shortage of electricity in the State; and

(d) if so, whether Government would take any action in this regard, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) After the formation of Chhattisgarh State during November, 2000, Kerosene allocation of the undivided Madhya Pradesh State was bifurcated between Chhattisgarh and the present State of Madhya Pradesh. Subsequent reduction in kerosene allocation to the present State of Madhya Pradesh has been in accordance with the policy adopted to reduce allocation taking into account number of LPG connections released in each of the State/ Union Territory (UT) during a particular period.

(b) 685182 Metric Tonnes (MTs) during 2000-2001, 511168 MTs and 497726 MTs of kerosene was allocated for the State of Madhya Pradesh during 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 respectively. These allocations were made as per the policy adopted by the Government and not made based on the population.

(c) Yes, Sir. A request was received from Government of Madhya Pradesh regarding enhancement of monthly quota of SKO.

(d) In view of prevailing policy of reducing SKO allocation taking into account number of LPG connections released in each of the State/UT, the request of Madhya Pradesh could not be accepted to.

Dual Price System for Kerosene

†2948. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that two rates have been fixed to collect excise duty on kerosene oil;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.